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Reserve and national guardsmen make up 40-percent of the U.S. troops serving in Iraq, but fewer people are signing up for duty. The Illinois National Guard revealed it's recruiting and retention numbers are down this year. It's part of a nationwide trend.

Local military members say extended deployments, suicide bombings in Iraq and financial insecurity at home are some of the reasons they decide not to sign up.

Two congressmen held a hearing in Chicago Tuesday. They're looking to make the job of being a part-time soldier more attractive.

The three main things that affect the recruiting and retention of reserves are training, support from the homefront and employers, and length of deployment overseas.

"We walk around the house and every time the phone rings and the caller ID says, "US Government," it's like 'Oh my God! Is this the call?" said Pat Murray, naval reservist's wife.

Uncertainty is a fact of life for Pat Murray and her husband. As a family liaison, she hears from reservists concerned about how their once, one weekend a month job has become a full-time burden.

In the 90's, reservists worked an average of 13-million man days per year. In 2003, that number jumped to 64-million. Today, there are more than 2,400 Illinois National Guard members on active-duty in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"The all volunteer army is working -- but on the National Guard, we've got some work to do. That's why legislation is needed," said Rep. Mark Kirk (R) North Shore.

Representatives Mark Kirk and Judy Biggert summoned military brass to a hearing downtown Tuesday. They're pushing for a permanent increase in the size of the active-duty army and better pay and benefits for reservists. The goal is not to dissuade "weekend warriors" by deploying them like they are "full-time" soldiers.